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SOME ASPECTS OF FOLK CURING IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST*

FRANCES McFEELY
Berkeley, California

Medical knowledge brought by the Spaniards to the New World persists in present day Mexico and survivals of it are numerous among Latin-American peoples. They have, however, received scant attention from anthropologists. The present study attempts to identify some of the older elements in modern folk curing as practiced by informants with a Mexican cultural background now living in California and the Southwest. The method followed has been to compare informants' statements which imply a classification of diseases or remedies with similar statements and medical doctrine found in Mexican works on medicine of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I.

MEDICAL THEORY IN COLONIAL MEXICO

Medical theory in early colonial Mexico stemmed from the Hippocratic point of view that general bodily health depended upon the distribution of the four elements—earth, fire, water, and air—whose cardinal properties were dryness, warmth, coldness and moistness. Their mixture formed the body and its constituents. It was Aristotle, however, who developed the doctrine of the fundamental opposition of the qualities of heat, cold, wetness, and dryness, that are combined in pairs in the four elements. The schematization followed that earth was cold and dry; water, cold and wet; air, hot and wet; and fire, hot and dry.¹ To correspond to the four elements, body fluids or humors also were fixed at four—blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile.²

* This article is a condensed version of a thesis of the same title which was presented by the author in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts to the Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, June, 1949. She wishes to express her gratitude to the members of her thesis committee, Drs. Rowe, Mandelbaum and Simpson, for their assistance in the preparation of the material, and especially to the chairman, Dr. Rowe.

¹ Singer, Charles, *Greek Biology and Greek Medicine*, Oxford, 1922, p. 39.

² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

For Hippocrates, the dynamics of the functioning or malfunctioning of the *physis*, the individual, was controlled by the distribution of the four humors or fluids in their proportion throughout the body; health existed when a proper portion of *eucrasia* existed. Abnormal mixture or *dyscrasia* resulted in illness. Happily, the body possessed a tendency to effect *eucrasia*, to recover its balance through a fundamental condition of life—innate heat, a quality greater in youth when most fuel is required, than in old age.³

Hippocratic theory also postulated another necessity for the support of life, known as *pneuma*, which Galen's translator renders, vital air.⁴ The latter set forth that vital air, originating in pulmonary respiration was distributed through the body by the arteries, much as blood by the veins, and was needed to make operative the various powers or faculties of the *physis*.⁵

Apparently *dyscrasia* or excess of one of the humors might be a natural tendency of the individual, leading to the different temperaments as sanguineous, phlegmatic, bilious, or melancholic, and to a predisposition to diseases peculiar to the type.⁶ It is interesting to note in this connection that "temperament," originally the translation of the Greek word *crasis* or mixture, mingling, referred to the mixture of the four humors. Galen in elaborating the notion of temperament perhaps helped to give it its modern meaning of personality by noting that an excess of yellow bile might induce delirium, or that phlegm and chilling agents in general caused "lethargous, whereby both memory and intelligence are impaired,"⁷ that dryness gave the soul understanding. Galen maintained the concept that the mental faculties followed the bodily constitution.⁸

Hippocratic theory also held that *dyscrasia* might be caused by an imbalance in the environment, since interaction between the individual and the environment was the essential life process. Were one of the elements—or more generally one of the corre-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 96; Brock, Arthur, *Greek Medicine*, London, 1929, p. 10.

⁴ Singer, p. 96; Brock, p. 29.

⁵ Brock, p. 29.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

sponding qualities of dryness, cold, heat or dampness—in excess, an excess in the corresponding humors of the patient's body would result. Environment comprehended not only "airs, waters, and places" but all the food ingested by the patient.⁹ Galen further described the process:

"I am personally certain that each article of food is first swallowed into the stomach and is there elaborated, that after it is taken up by the veins which pass from liver to stomach; that it then produces the body juices or humors, from which are nourished among other parts, the brain, the heart, and the liver, and that in the process of nutrition these organs become warmer, colder, or moister, according to the powers of the predominating juices."¹⁰

Excess in one or more of the humors was eliminated as waste matter or excess products, either by a striving of the body for its natural balance or by the use of drugs. Greek medical practice as established by Hippocrates did not, however, include an extensive use of drugs, although at the University of Alexandria, a more extensive use of them was grafted upon Greek medical learning. With the fall of Corinth and the subsequent migration of Greek physicians to Rome, where many drugs were in use, the combined influence of Greek, Alexandrian, and Roman medicine led to their still greater use.¹¹

The primary source of all herbals, concerned usually with descriptions of the cultivation, collection and properties of drugs, was that of Dioscorides, a surgeon in the army of Nero, who during his travels in the second century, A.D., collected information concerning remedies and the drugs used. These formed the remedies in use in Europe during the Middle Ages, and, with additions from Arabic sources and the Americas, those used during the Renaissance.¹² A discussion of the botany of Dioscorides was an integral part of almost every sixteenth century herbal.¹³

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

¹¹ Haggard, Howard, *Devils, Drugs, and Doctors*, New York, 1929, p. 354.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 354.

¹³ Arber, Agnes, *Herbals, Their Origin and Evolution*, University Press, Cambridge, 1912, p. 8.

The properties of various herbs as described by Dioscorides were elaborated into a system of usage by Galen (b. 131 A.D.), whose influence upon medical practice was enormous. Galen himself accepted and developed the Hippocratic conceptions of the nature of the body, such acceptance forming the basis of his usage of herbs.¹⁴ He held that in the state of *dyscrasia*, should the organism be unable to expell its waste matters, the physician aided it by administering drugs with specially selective action on the various humors. Use of the drugs was greatly complicated by their possessing degrees of the various four qualities. For example, bitter almond was heating to the first degree and drying to the second; pepper, heating to the fourth degree; cucumber seeds, cooling¹⁵ to the fourth degree. Elaborate mixtures of the herbs, depending upon the character and intensity of the disease, were prepared to restore the proper balance of qualities in the body.¹⁶

Later herbals show the influence of Galen, being preoccupied with the four qualities, their *crasis*, and the herbs which give the power to "restore, produce, give and temper the four natures," to quote from the second Augsburg edition of 1485 of the preface of *Herbarius zu Teutsch*, an important early printed herbal.

There remains Andrea Cesapino (1519-1603) to be spoken of, as one of the chief exponents of Aristotelian botany during the Renaissance, interesting himself in plants from the standpoint of both medicine and natural history. While he, like other herbalists, was more concerned with mere description of the plants, the first book of his great work *De plantis libri XVI* contains an account of the theory of botany along Aristotelian lines.¹⁶

As for the state of Spanish medicine during the period prior to the Conquest, its reputation was brilliant in Europe. Valladolid, along with Montpellier and Bologna, was one of the three great centers of medical study; the contributions of individuals are numerous. Although all Europe had been greatly influenced by the Greeks and Arabs, Spain was especially indebted to them, being the center of western Arabic knowledge. The Arabs had founded a good hospital in Cordova in connection with a medical

¹⁴ Haggard, p. 354.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 355 f.

¹⁶ Arber, p. 116.

school and model botanical gardens at Guadix and Toledo.¹⁷ However, reference to sixteenth century Spanish herbals is lacking in the literature.¹⁸

There were restrictions on immigration to America to insure that the majority of doctors coming to the New World were trained men, well acquainted with common practices in Europe at the time,¹⁹ but the regulations did not prevent many "quacks" from practicing in the Indies.

The value of the reports made by the Spanish physicians concerning the new remedies of America cannot be exaggerated. One important example is the herbal compiled by Nicholas Monardes, a Spanish doctor, published in 1569 and 1571; Monardes, who had not himself visited the New World, gives an account of plants brought to Europe from the West Indies. This work was translated into English in 1577 by John Frampton as *Joyful newes out of the newe founde worlde*.²⁰ Sixty percent of modern medicines have come from Spanish America.²¹ Although the items of Spain's exploitation of her colonies are commonly thought of as the precious metals and jewels, her exploitation of the *materia medica* has proven to be the more enduring contribution to culture.²² There was much activity in the New World in the field of medicine; six teaching posts were set up between 1525 and 1599.²³ Through these physicians, upon whom the influence of Mexican practices was great, all of Europe undoubtedly absorbed the native knowledge of New Spain.²⁴

Among the earlier recorders of curing practices in New Spain, Francisco Hernandez, physician to the King of Spain and sent by Philip II to Mexico, was one of the most important. A man of vast learning, translator of Pliny's *Natural History*, he examined and described the class and forms of plants, animals, and

¹⁷ Moll, Aristedes, *Aesculapius in Latin America*, New York, 1944, p. 38.

¹⁸ Simpson states that the apothecary items in Spain were essentially the same as those common throughout Europe at the time. Simpson, Lesley B., "The Medicine of the Conquistadores," *Osiris*, No. 3, 1937, p. 143.

¹⁹ Fisher, E. M., *Medical Knowledge in New Spain During the 16th Century*, M.A. thesis, University of California, 1921, p. 78.

²⁰ Arber, p. 9.

²¹ Fisher, p. 14.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²³ Moll, p. 107.

²⁴ Fisher, p. 20.

minerals in Mexico and investigated their virtues and uses during a period of seven years (1571-1577). He made frequent identifications of Mexican plants with those of Europe, especially those previously described by Dioscorides and Pliny.²⁵ Others he found were solely aboriginal. He took pains to classify many as to their properties of heating, cooling, drying, and moistening, though in many instances he did not indicate the degrees of these fundamental qualities which each item possessed. Frequently he expressed uncertainty as to the quality to be ascribed to the native medicine; he often qualifies his descriptions by stating that the medicine "seemed to be" or "probably was" heating, cooling, moistening or drying.

Bernardino de Sahagun (1499-1590), the "Pliny of the New World," came to Mexico when thirty-one years old and stayed until his death, teaching for several years in the Franciscan college at Tlatelolco. One of his books is devoted to Mexican diseases and drugs, and another to local plants and animals, data concerning which he obtained from native talent.²⁶ Drawings also are included. His material, which had been much used by Hernandez, remained unpublished until the nineteenth century.²⁷

Neither Hernandez nor Sahagun found the doctrine of opposition present in Mexican medicine.²⁸ However, Hernandez notes in his comment on *Del Amatzallin or herba multifida* that:

"It is scented, bitter and heating, however, the Indian doctors say that the ointment stops fevers, perhaps drawing the cause of the sickness toward the skin, or as is said, drawing out the heat of the fever with the heat of the medicine."²⁹

Another early major contributor to the medicine of New Spain was Gregorio Lopez, a religious who wrote the *Tesoro de Medicina* (1580).³⁰ The work included a list showing "the qualities of herbs and simples for your (the reader's) knowledge and use:

²⁵ Hernandez, Francisco, *Historia de las Plantas de Nueva Espana*, Instituto de Biología, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico, 1942, p. xi-xxi.

²⁶ Moll, p. 40.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

²⁸ Hernandez, p. 253; Fisher, p. 137.

²⁹ Hernandez, p. 253.

³⁰ Not to be confused with Alonso Lopez de Hinojos, S.J., who wrote *Suma y Recopilacion de Cirugia*.

of these there are four, convenient to know—hot, cold, dry, moist. They are indicated in the following indices by the letters C, F, S, H, and the letter T., showing the temperateness of the quality. The degree is denoted by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, which is the highest.”³¹

Lopez lived a lonely life among the Chichimecs of the valley of Atemajac and had little contact with his fellow countrymen. His treatise on medicine is supposed to have been based upon what he learned among the natives.³² Nevertheless, he describes a list of medicines used in curing which he identifies according to the theory of opposition and for the most part uses the Spanish name rather than the Indian for the items described.³³ Since his *Tesoro* was written in 1580 while he was ill in the hospital of Huastepet,³⁴ it may be conjectured that he had the help of the Spanish physicians there, who were, of course, familiar with the doctrine. Another possibility is that if the natives were his sources of information, the doctrine of opposition may have already been introduced among them.

Father Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., of the Santa Barbara Mission, states that neither in his historical research of Franciscan mission records, nor in Englehardt's *Franciscans in California* has he noted reference to much material on curing.³⁵ He recalls none with reference to the doctrine of opposition. He points out, however, that this has not been the subject of his interest; it may well be that such material does exist, reflecting some continuity of the belief into recent Southwestern practices, through the channels of the Franciscans. In any case, this sort of information would probably not have been preserved in a mission archive, devoted primarily to official and business records.

The doctrine of opposition is evident in several medical books written in the colonial period. The Augustinian monk Farfan compiled a medical text of New Spain in the sixteenth century, classifying according to the doctrine. In rural northern Mexico,

³¹ Lopez, Gregorio, *Tesoro de Medicina, En Mexico por Francisco Rodriguez Lupercio*, 1674, not paged.

³² Fisher, p. 139.

³³ Lopez.

³⁴ Ocaranza, Fernando, *Historia de la Medicina en Mexico*, Mexico, D.F., 1934, p. 122.

³⁵ Personal Communication.

an important aid to the continuity of the doctrine was the *Florilegio medicinal de todas las enfermedades* taken from various classical authors and compiled by Juan de Esteyneffer, also known as Brother Steinefer, Johann of Moravia (eighteenth century). The book is directed toward the welfare of the poor and those who lack doctors, particularly in those remote provinces which the Missionaries of the Society of Jesus administered; Steinefer mentions the provinces of Topia, Sinaloa, Tepeguanes, Tarau-mara, Sonora, and California. His medical theory is Galenic. The intrinsic causes of sickness are the complex humors of the body; in order to restore health, the *humor peccante* of the body must be evacuated. When imbalance among the other humors in the body exists, it must be eliminated by such means as vomiting, sweating, and urination.³⁶ Whatever its early status, the doctrine of opposition became so integrated in the curing of diseases in the New World that the qualities of heating and cooling were attributed to prayer; in relation to illness, a *Salve* was cooling and a *Credo* heating.³⁷

For a considerable time in the colonial period in Mexico, the doctrine seems to have been dominant, being taught in the early eighteenth century by Don Marcus Jose Salgado, who was born and educated in Mexico. His contemporaries referred to him as a second Galen and the "Mercury of Mexico." Among his achievements is the first treatise on physiology written by a person reared and educated in continental America. His teaching for the most part was based on the old doctrine of humors, and he based his course on the ancient custom of considering the theory of the elements,³⁸ as did all medical studies throughout Mexico.³⁹ Although basically his ideas were frankly Aristotelian,⁴⁰ he made such efforts to rephrase and redefine many of the old concepts,⁴¹ that one may safely conjecture that he had more than a "moment of doubt" from time to time; one contemporary, a Dr. Vega, is

³⁶ Esteyneffer, Juan de, S.J., *Florilegio Medicinal* (Con liscennia en Mexico por los herederos de Juan Guillena Carrascoso, 1712), pp. 473-515.

³⁷ Moll, p. 130.

³⁸ Izquierdo, Jose Jouquin, *Bolance Cuatricentenario de la Fisiologia de Mexico*, Ediciones Scienzia Mexico, 1934, pp. 59-64.

³⁹ Moll, p. 103.

⁴⁰ Izquierdo, p. 70.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-115.

quoted as saying that Salgado declared war on Galen, though another, Dr. Rojas, declared that he relit the lamps of Hippocrates and Galen. He succeeded in reorganizing and pointing up some new emphasis in the old material.⁴²

After Salgado's time and only toward the end of the eighteenth century the various European treatises of a scientific nature began to be considered in Mexico, and scientific medicine began to seep into the official medicine of Mexico.⁴³ It is on the folklore level that indications of the older teachings may be found.

II.

FOLK CURING IN THE SOUTHWEST

The field work by the present writer was done in the American Southwest to investigate whether the influence of Spanish medical knowledge has persisted in the New World to the present, especially in regard to the doctrine of opposition in herb usage and other curing items. Undoubtedly scientific medicine is recognized among the folk; a home medical book, published in Spain in 1921, which contains no reference to any of the old concepts and seems to be based on present day principles, was shown, for instance, by one informant from Mexico.⁴⁴ Foster notes that the trained physician enjoys a growing participation in the life of Tzintzuntzan.⁴⁵ But the *curandero* remains active.

Several difficulties were encountered with the informants. The most informed source, reputedly a practicing *curandera*, was unfortunately also the most reticent person; she is highly regarded by her Spanish-speaking community and some wonderful cures are ascribed to her. She guarded her secrets as treasured possessions and perhaps feared legal action as she is practicing without a license. Another aged informant, wondering if the present author herself wished to cure people, did not wish to share her knowledge with a possible competitor. A further barrier seemed to be her suspicion that her brains were to be picked to

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-146.

⁴⁴ Boue, Wilfredo, *Medico del Hogar*, Obras Cientificas Industriales, Libreria D. Riba, Barcelona, 1921.

⁴⁵ Foster, George, *Empire's Children, the People of Tzintzuntzan*, Smithsonian Inst. of Social Anthropology Publications, No. 6, Washington, 1948, p. 266.

the profit of the author in the writing of a book. She also thought, as did another, that medical information in the hands of an inexperienced person might be used disastrously in attempted cures. A fourth informant was said by her daughter to have denied knowledge of several items inasmuch as they were used as abortives. The reason for the secrecy did not seem to be lack of rapport; but the secrets are precious ones and not shared even with others in the culture group except as a special gesture or through inheritance. One correspondent, E.S., tells of a land-owner in Mexico who was cured of a serious illness by one of his laborers who had considerable knowledge of herbs. When he asked the man what had been used and the manner of preparation, he was told: "Don Jose, it would do you no good to know. When you were sick and needed it, I gave it to you; now that you are well and do not need its help, the knowledge would serve no purpose."⁴⁶

One informant, reared in Arizona, had learned of opposition in curing there, from her mother, who was born and reared in Sonora, Mexico, and from her husband, a former resident of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. She was unable to separate her knowledge into what was Arizonan and what was Mexican.

There were two groups of informants: some who gave only general information are referred to by their initials, and others with whom certain material was reviewed are referred to by lower case letters "a" through "g".⁴⁷

Among the persons questioned, the concept of the humors did not emerge clearly. V.M., aged forty, who has lived most of her life in the upper Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico, much of the time in the villages, says of them only: "*Mal humor* applies to someone with a foul body odor or a mean disposition; *buen humor*, to someone with a clean healthy odor or a good disposition. *Humor fuerte* also means a carrier of disease; for example, someone has *un humor* for fevers and casts an evil eye because of the ease with which he transmits illness. A non-carrier of disease, a negative person, has a *un humor frio*."

E.M., aged thirty-five, the son of a couple who emigrated to

⁴⁶ Personal Communication.

⁴⁷ Further identification of the informants, including names and addresses, is on file with the Department of Anthropology, University of California.

California from Guanajuato, Mexico, reports that: "*Humores* are the sensitive part of your body. Let's say, for example, that it is a very hot day; your body becomes weak; you do not have enough resistance. Then one might say that the person does not have *un humor* to work. So if you are lazy, that's a sickness. *Humores* are also spoken of in a different way; for example, if your body swells, then you can be classed as having a strong *humor*."⁴⁸

D.T., a middle-aged Spanish-American, who has always lived in rural New Mexico, summed up conversation with a ninety-two-year-old *curandero*, who spent most of his life in Mexico, in the following way: "The principles of body humors can be expressed as the general resistance of the body to fight sickness; or it can be an allergy. A person may be said to have such strong humor that he never catches any sickness; whereas another person has *mal humor* and hence gets sick easily." Informant "c" speaks of humores as being present in every part of the body; she related them particularly to the tiny hair of the skin: "Each hair on the body is an *humor* because in each hair is life. The *humor* enters and leaves through the hair. If the body is clean, the *humor* is clean; if the body is not clean, the *humor* is bad." Informant "e" states: "If a room is full of people there is a bad *humor*. People have a good *humor* when they bathe. The bad *humor* of a crowded room is the heat and the germs in the atmosphere. It cannot be seen, but it is around people when conditions are suited to *mal humores*."

Informant "d" is not certain of what the *humores* are. She believes they are specific entities; for example, *flema* is a *humor*. When one is well the *humor* *flema* is crystalline; when one has a chest cold, the *flema* is white; and when one is really ill, the *flema* is green or yellow. This is obvious because of the yellow skin which results. Some *humores*—for example, *sudor* or sweat—can transmit illness; the clothing of the sick person on which there is perspiration, if handled, can pass on the malady. The stronger the *sudor*, the sicker one is. Another *humor* is *gastico*, or gas. In illness, it goes into the stomach; at other times it stays in the lungs. The state of *sangre* (blood), another *humor*, can be seen in the eyes; when it is strong and not good, one has bags

⁴⁸ Brock, p. 230.

under the eyes and they are swollen, tired, and sleepy-looking. Boils and skin eruptions are also caused by overly rich and strong blood. *Bilas* is not an *humor* as she first thought, since it is not contagious; it is rather a pain felt when one is scared or frightened and is characterized by green and yellow phlegm.

In connection with her classification of *bilas*, it is interesting to note that Foster also found it in connection with fright or terror (*susto*), though not as a pain but as a vague abstract substance closely correlated with the blood. It should be noted that fright is recognized as a disease,⁴⁹ caused by loss of blood, which the *bilas*, producing a fever, "boils" away.⁵⁰ In this scheme, its function seems to indicate that it is an *humor* and Gillin notes that it is treated with cold foods in Moche,⁵¹ although one informant interviewed for the present paper treated it with sugar and stick cinnamon, both of which she classified as hot.

It would seem apparent that the conception of the *humores* as it functioned in the Hippocratic and Galenic schematization—having names, being numbered, and in proper proportion, and causing illness through imbalance—has been partially lost. They retain something of the suggestion of power, though vaguely defined. It is perhaps suggestive to note in connection with the characteristic diffuseness ascribed to them, that Galen considered that all the humors were contained in the blood and were the source of health.⁵²

In contrast, the doctrine of opposition has retained more body in the information gathered from the field, although the opposition is for the most part between hot and cold; the qualities of moist and dry are less frequently mentioned and enter less into the diagnosis of illnesses, which are classified for the most part as "cold" or "heat" in the stomach, necessitating a remedy either heating or cooling to drive out the opposing quality. The same simplifying of the original theory seems to have been found by Gillin.⁵³ In this connection it is suggestive to note the Galenic

⁴⁹ Foster, p. 267; Gillin, John, *Moche, a Peruvian Coastal Community*, Smithsonian Inst., Washington, 1947, p. 131.

⁵⁰ Foster, p. 267.

⁵¹ Gillin, p. 133.

⁵² Coxe, John R., *Writings of Hippocrates and Galen*, Philadelphia, 1846, p. 495.

⁵³ Gillin, p. 53.

theory that the inserted ailments came down through the digestive tract until they reached the intestine where they were absorbed in the form of chyle, which was collected through the portal vessel and taken to the liver, the residence of innate heat.⁵⁴ Since the liver is customarily confused with the stomach, the location of cold or hot in the stomach seems to parallel the Galenic theory. Though the diseases are classified on what sometimes appears to be a rational basis—anemia is a "cold" disease; malaria, a "hot" one—most informants reported that in practice it is difficult to know whether one is treating a "hot" or "cold" condition. The various symptoms such as the extent of fever, diarrhea, quality of vomit and of body excreta, and delirium, are clues to the condition and there are groups of medicines known by experience to be effective in certain disorders. Faith that God will effect a cure with the medicine is an important part of the curing process. Actually, faith healing has been the essence of all pre-scientific medicine.

Some of the informants mentioned that certain items were heating if used in one manner, and cooling if in another; for example, quick lime when dry is cooling, and when wet, is heating. *Calabaza Mexicana* when boiled is cold, but when roasted is hot. Informant "c" also noted that given items can have at one time the quality of heating and at another, of cooling, depending upon the manner of use. Unlike the older authors, the present day informants did not as frequently ascribe different qualities to the roots, leaves, and blossoms of a plant.

The concept of degree in the quality ascribed to the various herbs and curing foods has been for the most part lost. Some instances of it persist. For example, the heating quality of mustard may be raised or lowered by adulteration with another material, such as flour. Informant "c" indicated that to control the heating or cooling quality of an item she would mix with it *lima*, *limon*, or *tequisquite*, a crude sodium bicarbonate.

The term *cordial* was used in three ways by the informants. It might be an item not excessive in either of the opposite qualities—a concept that seems to have a parallel in the *templana* of Lopez. Informant "e" defined *cordial* as neither hot nor cold but temperate. Informant "c" defined it as an herb whose quality

⁵⁴ Brock, p. 240.

can be changed from hot to cold by adding another ingredient; for example, *acasia* with *tequisquite* is *cordial*, but alone it is cold. For a third informant, *cordial* had no connotation of the quality of opposition but indicated items used as either a food or medicine.

Among the items reviewed with informants several foods are included. Gillin found that all foods were classified as hot or cold, although such classification became of importance only during periods of illness.⁵⁵ One interesting item found during the present field investigation was described by informant "c" as the *leche tercera* or the third squirt from the cow's udder which contains all the body building substances, such as vitamins.

In the investigation of the current practices of classifying items of treatment as to their qualities, available sixteenth century Mexican lists which ascribe qualities have been used as a base line to determine the persistence of the older learning in this area. The list of Gregorio Lopez from his *Tesoro de Medicina* and that of Hernandez, as noted in a recent publication of his work edited in Mexico, have been selected.⁵⁶ They include more than eight hundred items.

III.

CONCLUSION

With a loss of the official written body of medical theory as known to the early Spaniards, medical practice stemming from it has been subjected to local changes as a folk lore tradition; some general changes have been mentioned, such as the loss of grading for the qualities, and the loss of the qualities of moist and dry. The qualities of hot and cold remain, as has been noted; even so, identification of items in terms of these two qualities does not always correspond to that on the older lists. The qualities of some items are obvious; mustard is hot while cucumber is cold. These apparently represent an integration into folk practices of the doctrine of opposition that remained constant. However, there is an impression from the work with the informants that they have no consciousness of a general theory behind their

⁵⁵ Gillin, p. 57.

⁵⁶ Hernandez, 1942.

current practices; plants and other curing items have been correlated with the qualities without a formalized theory of the nature of illness and the human organism.

The information gathered from the several informants so far reveals no evidence of a system. Much of what is practiced in terms of hot and cold appears to have been memorized item by item from a person who had passed on what she knew of the virtues and qualities of the herbs and other items. There is only a nebulous idea of the nature of the humors.

From an examination of the field material several trends appear. The most apparent is that an overwhelmingly larger group of items mentioned by Lopez were assigned oppositional qualities by informants than those listed by Hernandez. Further, the greater the number of informants ascribing quality to a given item, the greater was their agreement as to the quality noted on the older list. Moreover, such an item was usually found on the Lopez list and rarely on the Hernandez list. For items listed both by Hernandez and Lopez, the informants have ascribed qualities to surprisingly few; it should be mentioned that no botanical cross-referencing was done between the two lists. It is interesting to note that there were more than half (of the roughly 350 items out of the original 800 which still carried oppositional qualities for the informants), where there was reasonable certainty that the informants and the old lists were in accord as to the identity of the item. With reference to these items there appeared to be a higher correlation in the oppositional qualities noted, both between the informants and the sixteenth century lists, as well as between the informants themselves.

These aspects which emerge from the field work are perhaps due to the differences in the nature of the lists compiled by the two men, which seems to have been dictated largely by the difference in purpose. Hernandez was interested in scientific classification; he dealt for the most part with plants not integrated into Spanish medical tradition and was suggesting the integration of them. He is at times tentative in his characterization of his items; for a number he gave no quality at all. Lopez, however, as a religious, was compiling what might be described as a book of household remedies. He was, therefore, less likely to discuss items about which there was some doubt, and to deal more with

Spanish and American plants which had been integrated into the Spanish pattern. The loss among present day *curanderas* of many of the Hernandez items is probably due to the fact that they were not integrated into folk medical practice, while those on the Lopez lists are closer to the application of the European tradition to American plants.

In reviewing the anthropological literature on modern communities in Latin America, one is struck by the way in which the Galenic tradition and classification are ignored in studies of native medicine where they certainly exist. In some cases they are described, but attributed to a local magical origin. And even when they are described the ethnologist seems to be unaware of their European background.⁵⁷ As the Galenic tradition was general in all European countries, it would be interesting to have comparative material from various areas in the Americas which were settled by European groups other than the Spanish; for example, French Canada, Brazil, and the Appalachian region. One wonders what survivals of the Galenic classification still may exist in European folk medicine. Since the Galenic tradition has been found strong enough in the Spanish speaking groups to mold the medical practices of the informants, it is a living force that must be reckoned with, not only in studies of folklore and ethno-botany, but also in public health and medical care where it has important implications.

⁵⁷ Gillin, p. 54.

PERSONALITY STRUCTURE IN THE PLAINS

THOMAS GLADWIN

National Institute of Mental Health
Bethesda, Maryland

The Indians of the High Plains of North America have always been a favorite topic of anthropological discussion. Theirs is a unique record of cultural unity achieved from diversity. The Plains form one of the most clearly delimited and the most homogeneous of the culture areas of North America, yet most of the tribes we associate with the flowering of this area entered it within a very short period of time and stemmed from a wide variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Until the horse spread through this area, often in advance of the white men who had introduced it on this continent, the High Plains were only sparsely populated outside of the few river valleys. Although game, and particularly buffalo, was abundant, hunters could not subsist in any numbers in most of the area because of the great distances which separated the sources of water. Hunters wandering in search of a herd could well die of thirst before they made contact with it. There were seasonal hunts carried out into the Plains by those who lived on their peripheries and a few tribes, such as the Querecho described by Coronado's expedition, apparently did live all year in some sections of the area. But the difficulties of traversing the Plains on foot were enough to discourage most of the surrounding tribes from capitalizing on the resources of food represented by the vast herds of buffalo.

The horse removed these limitations. Now it was possible to camp near a stream, range widely each day, probably bring down a few buffalo or antelope, and carry the meat back packed on the horse. The lure of an assured food supply in a free and open country was irresistible. Almost overnight, during the 17th and early 18th Centuries, thousands of people flowed in from all sides to fill the vacuum. As each tribe emerged into this swirling, shifting potpourri of peoples, they repeatedly made contact with others they had never seen before, many of them groups of very different origin from themselves. Occasionally they made peace and an alliance, however informal, with another tribe, though

this was rare; the Cheyenne and the Arapaho are an example. More commonly they fought. The horse provided not only the means but a major incentive for highly mobile warfare. This was characterized by hit and run raids, whose principal goals were acquiring honor and stealing horses. All the tribes of the Plains participated in this warfare; it was the most striking common feature of their various cultures, and provided the basic orientation of all of these societies. Whatever may have been their prestige structure before their emergence onto the Plains, in every tribe the people now centered their attention upon the young men of fighting age.

The most significant fact for the social scientist, however, is that few of these peoples were culturally equipped for dealing with the problems of horse nomadism before they left their home territories. As a result, they borrowed these skills from their neighbors; despite the state of almost constant hostility which characterized practically all intertribal relations, each new technique which was developed by one group spread rapidly to all the others. Thus in a short time a whole new way of life was evolved and as rapidly taken up by all the Plains tribes. Not only were the technical aspects of warfare and hunting methods so diffused, but also many associated beliefs and attitudes and values, as well as their characteristic social organization in bands, and even ceremonies, of which the Sun Dance is the most familiar.

They apparently acquired the habit of borrowing and could not stop. By the beginning of the 19th Century, when the Plains peoples entered their Golden Age of thirty or forty years of untrammeled freedom, all these tribes of so diverse origin shared what was almost a common culture, whose principal values centered on warfare and whose subsistence was based almost exclusively on the vast herds of buffalo (bison) which roamed the prairie.

Mooney,¹ in writing of the Cheyenne, summarizes graphically the degree of transformation undergone by the culture of one of the tribes usually considered to be among the most typical of the Plains societies. He describes the Cheyenne as:

¹Mooney, J., "The Cheyenne Indians," *Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association*, vol. 1, 1907, p. 361.

A sedentary and agricultural people cut off from the main body of their kindred and transformed by pressure of circumstance within the historic period into a race of nomad and predatory hunters, with such entire change of habit and ceremony that the old life is remembered only in sacred tradition and would seem impossible of belief but for the connected documentary proof of fact. The Cheyenne chasing buffalo on the Staked plain were a stumbling block in [the historical study of] Algonquian philology. The Cheyenne planting corn in Minnesota, in friendly neighborhood to the Ojibwa, are a perfectly feasible Algonquian proposition. Practically all that they have today of tribal life and ceremony, excepting the Medicine Arrow rite, has been acquired in the course of this migration, and the oldest things date back not more than two centuries.

With their cultures so uniform and yet so new to each, the question naturally arises whether this new life had the same meaning for all of the Plains peoples. In other words, did they shed their old personalities at the same time that they abandoned their old ways of life?

In order to explore this question, I have selected two of the better known of the typical Plains tribes for examination, the Comanche and the Cheyenne. The Comanche have already been analyzed from the psychological standpoint by Abram Kardiner² on the basis of Ralph Linton's notes. No such analysis has been attempted for the Cheyenne, but Grinnell's³ highly sympathetic two volume work on these people is a rich source of relevant information, supplemented by a number of more specialized accounts. Using this material, plus the three fragmentary biographies of Cheyennes which have been published,⁴ I have sought comparisons with Kardiner's Comanche analysis.

It is obviously beyond the scope of this paper to summarize

²Kardiner, A., *The Psychological Frontiers of Society*, N. Y., 1945, pp. 81-100.

³Grinnell, G. B., *The Cheyenne Indians*, 2 vols., New Haven, 1923.

⁴Bonnerjea, B., *Reminiscences of a Cheyenne Indian*, Journal de la Societe des Americanistes, vol. 27, n.s., pp. 129-43; Grinnell, G. B., *When Buffalo Ran*, New Haven, 1920; Michelson, T., *The Narrative of a Southern Cheyenne Woman*, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 87, no. 5, 1932.

the cultures of these two peoples; a few contrasts will be sufficient to set the stage, remembering that in spite of these differences each bore a much closer cultural resemblance to the other than either did to the erstwhile neighbors which they left in order to take up the romantic life of the Plains.

The Comanche were originally one of the western Plateau Shoshonean tribes, whose home was in southern Wyoming, and whose former humble way of life is still followed by many of the Shoshoni and Paiute, who until recently eked out a bare and rude existence by simple hunting and the gathering of wild berries and roots and seeds.⁵ The people wandered in very small economically self-sufficient groups throughout the year, coming together with other bands very briefly in the summer; the need for social organization and social controls was at a minimum. The Comanche carried with them into the Plains this extremely fluid, unstructured and informal way of life.

The Cheyenne, on the other hand, were an Algonkin people, previously sharing the general Woodland culture of the western Great Lakes area. During the 18th Century they had moved down to the Missouri River; before they took up the nomad's life they had been for some time in close association with the Mandan, a well-organized agricultural village people like themselves. They brought with them a more structured social and political organization, and a far greater emphasis on ritual and etiquette.

After their establishment among the nomadic horsemen of the Plains, with the revolutionary adaptation to the new cultural patterns and way of life this entailed, it is not surprising to find that the Comanche and Cheyenne also came to share in common a number of new cultural determinants of personality, which we would expect to have had a strong influence in shaping their personalities toward a common pattern. In both we find, as might be expected from their major orientation toward warfare, an emphasis on masculine vitality and courage, which found its ultimate vindication in the terrifying and uncertain moments of the attack. Although in the Cheyenne a very few men could take up the homosexual role of the *berdache*, neither

⁵Linton provides a good summary of the historical and cultural background of the Comanche in Kardiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-51.

society offered to the majority of youths any approved means of avoiding this test, nor to the adult any permanent respite from the hazardous trials of warfare without shame and loss of status.

In both Comanche and Cheyenne, the major burden of the upbringing of small children devolved upon their grandparents and their older siblings, real or classificatory, especially sisters. These were the people primarily responsible for imposing disciplines and restraints, though in this respect the Cheyenne leaned rather more heavily than did the Comanche on the grandparents, the older siblings being responsible primarily for only the physical care of Cheyenne infants and children. It might be concluded from the fact that in the Cheyenne siblings had less disciplinary functions than among the Comanche, sibling hostility would be less pronounced in the former than in the latter. However, in keeping with the generally more restrictive nature of Cheyenne social controls, a severe taboo was placed on all relations between adult brothers and sisters in this society, amounting to a ban on even speaking to each other in ordinary circumstances. Consequently, neither hostility nor its opposite could be expected to find overt expression in this relationship.

In keeping with the shifting of the disciplinary functions to siblings and grandparents, the Cheyenne and Comanche parents treated their children not as a different order of beings, but simply as smaller and not yet fully competent adults. The first animal a boy killed in either society was the occasion for great acclaim and compliments from his parents and other adults, as great as if he had brought down a buffalo bull. This pattern was retained for all childhood accomplishments, so that the parents were consistently rewarding agents, while others did the punishing. Not only did this reduce ambivalence in the child's attitude toward those upon whom he was most dependent, his parents, but it also made the transition into adult life extremely easy: there was, to use Benedict's concept, no discontinuity of role between childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. There were no puberty ceremonies for boys in either tribe, though adult status was considered achieved only after the first war party. The psychological effects of this experience were undoubtedly more severe, however, for the Cheyenne boy than the Comanche, for in the former he went out when he was four-

teen or fifteen, as against seventeen or eighteen in the latter, and sex experience was denied him until this time, a restriction not imposed upon the Comanche youth.

Despite these several important parallels in childhood development, there was one crucial respect in which they differed fundamentally. Kardiner found that probably the most striking single characteristic of Comanche childhood, adolescence, and adulthood was the almost complete freedom of expression granted to the individual, aggressively, sexually, or otherwise. Sexual conquests provided a major source of adolescent diversion, and even adults found a number of possible channels for such activity. Fights within the group, leading even to killings, were the concern only of the principals and perhaps their close friends and relatives. In the Cheyenne, on the other hand, repression and moderation of all overt emotional expression within the group was the rule, enforced from earliest childhood. These differing points of view found their expression in every aspect of daily life, and it is in consequence of these that we would expect to, and actually do, find the greatest differences between these peoples at the personality level.

The Cheyenne child though enthusiastically rewarded for any achievements reflecting technical skills was severely condemned for any aggression or even undue affection shown in interpersonal relations; at the same time a constant stream of advice and admonitions, particularly from the grandparents but echoed by the parents, served to build up the anxieties associated with such behavior. Though information on childhood sexuality is lacking, it seems almost certain that this too was repressed; we do know that the grandparents began early to warn the child of the calamity for the family if the child, and particularly the daughter, did not marry in the formal and respectable manner through family gift exchange. Such a marriage was made impossible not only if the girl chose to elope, but even if she were unchaste. To be unchaste a girl did not have to have intercourse with a boy; she was defiled if he touched her genitals, or even her breasts. For this reason, a Cheyenne girl after her first menstruation donned a rope and rawhide cover which acted quite effectively as a chastity belt. The woman whose account Michelson published remarked:

My mother would always tell me that the main purpose of her teaching me, as well as the object of my owning my own bed, was to keep me at home, and to keep me from being away to spend my nights with my girl chum [and hence away from parental supervision]. This was done so that there would be no chance for gossip by other people. . . .⁶

After I was married I thought I would have more freedom in going around with my girl friends, but my mother watched me more closely and kept me near my husband, day and night. This was done to prevent any gossip from my husband's people.⁷

We may contrast this with Linton's comment on the Comanche:

Sexual play between children began at an early age, and was carried on quite freely as long as the two children were not brother and sister. The Comanche paid no attention to virginity; they took these childhood relations more or less for granted.⁸

The Cheyenne repression of self-expression was particularly emphasized in dealing with parents and other adults. The child was, to use our phrase, to be seen but not heard; he had always to speak quietly, respectfully, and politely in the presence of adults. A breach of this rule brought down the wrath not only of the people involved, but also of the supernatural; loud and boisterous activity was irritating to a man's "power," which hung in a little bag in his tipi, and dire consequences of this annoyance were conjured up to warn the child to restraint. Practically the only outlet the society provided the children was in play groups, which during later childhood included both sexes, whose principal activities were elaborate imitations of adult activities, including home life, warfare, and hunting. These play groups were similarly organized in both Comanche and Cheyenne, but we may be fairly sure that the anxieties inculcated by the adults carried over into the play situations of the Cheyenne children; we are told that any wide deviations from acceptable behavior might

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁸ In Kardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

be made the subject of adult gossip and hence reprimand. Despite these reservations, it seems doubtful that a Cheyenne child could have grown to adulthood with even the limited capacity for self-expression he did show without the warmth of these playmate relationships and the opportunities for ego development they provided.

The differential expectations of these peoples in regard to interpersonal relations are perhaps most clearly shown in their attitudes and beliefs regarding the guardian spirit. The concept of the guardian spirit, the personal supernatural helper, was known to both, as it was to all Plains tribes, but their interpretations were totally different. The guardian spirit came to a Cheyenne through suffering: he fasted and prayed, often alone, and frequently inflicted tortures on himself. Even then the vision of the helper, usually an animal, bird or reptile, did not always come; and even when it did come, more often than not it gave advice or foretold the outcome of a projected activity, and left, never to return. Only rarely could a Cheyenne rely upon a guardian spirit of his own to help him in a succession of difficulties. On the other hand, practically every Comanche had his own guardian or "power," upon whom he could call at will; this helper was his for life. And he did not have to suffer to get it. Though a few who wished to obtain the power of a great man already dead spent a night by his grave waiting for the power to come, enduring nothing worse than fright, the usual practice was to ask a man who had the desired power to share it, giving a present in return; occasionally it came uninvited in a dream. Thus the Comanche asked for what he wanted and got it, and could rely upon his power thenceforward; the Cheyenne suffered desperately for the same thing, and was often not rewarded. While a Comanche's power came almost exclusively from his guardian spirit, much of a Cheyenne's power was of a more mechanical nature, from the little bag of amulets he carried or hung in his tipi, and from the careful observance of endless rituals.

Moving into the early adult level of the Cheyenne, we see these childhood and adolescent anxieties concerning interpersonal relationships and particularly sex expressed again in courtship and marriage. Courting techniques were extremely tenta-

tive, and even then frightening. The hero of Grinnell's biography stood by the trail covered with a blanket for days just to catch a glimpse of his sweetheart as she went out with the other women to get water. Finally one day she lagged behind and he dared reveal himself. "She stopped and we stood there and talked for a little while. We were both of us afraid, we did not know of what, and had not much to say, but it was pleasant to be there talking to her, and looking at her face. . . . After that, I think she knew me whenever I stood by the trail, and sometimes she was late in coming for water, and I had a chance to speak to her alone."⁹ At this time he had already been out on a war party, penetrating to the middle of an enemy camp alone, and was in the society's eyes a man. He went through several more years of indecision before finally marrying her. Again, we may compare Linton's account of the Comanche:

Boys often talked under the tipi edge to a favorite girl, then pulled out a tipi stake and crawled in to spend a large part of the night in her bed, getting away before dawn if he did not want to marry her. These contacts ended variously. If the couple suspected the opposition of the parents, or if some man had a previous claim, the couple would elope and return after a short time. Generally the marriage would then be accepted. If no opposition was expected, the boy simply slept late in bed with the girl, and the proper behavior for the father when he found them was to make the boy a brief and friendly speech—that is, that he was glad his daughter had found a husband—and invite him to breakfast.¹⁰

Even after marriage, it was not unusual for a Cheyenne girl to continue to wear her chastity ropes for several weeks. The woman of Michelson's account said, "We had our first child after we had been married a year. It was at this time that I really began to love my husband."¹¹ The ideal couple did not have a second child for ten years or so, meanwhile remaining continent.

⁹ Grinnell, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

¹⁰ In Kardiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

¹¹ Michelson, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

For a Cheyenne girl, the prospect of marriage was often made doubly forbidding by her parents' attempts to marry her off to a man she found personally distasteful. While she could refuse, there was great pressure upon her to avoid the shame for her family which would result from such a refusal, or, even worse, an elopement. The admonitions and veiled threats of years had led up to this moment; most girls gave in, but some, feeling that they would be outcasts from their own family anyway, eloped with someone else, while many were forced into suicide.

An additional fear also colored a Cheyenne boy's attitude toward courtship and marriage: these were only possible after he had been subjected to the terrifying ordeal of going on his first war party; the association between the two was inescapable. The Comanche placed no restrictions on a boy's relations with girls as we have seen, so that the first war party, while perhaps no less frightening, carried no identification with women as threatening creatures.

The anxieties of the Cheyenne were inevitably expressed in unconscious hostility between the sexes, and found clear symbolic expression in a mock fight. This took place when the women returned to the camp laden with roots after a day's digging; the phallic identification of the roots is obvious. When the women neared the camp they stopped, and, laying the roots out on the ground before them, uttered a war cry. The men charged out on old scrawny horses and staged a mock attack, the bravest dashing in to steal some roots.

More direct was the custom, described by Llewellyn and Hoebel¹² whereby a man punished an unfaithful wife. Inviting his entire soldier society to a "feast" on the prairie, he brought out the offending girl, and "gave" her to them. All the men who were not related to her raped her in succession; though there are no cases of a death resulting, the girl apparently seldom fully recovered, physically or socially. The authors conclude that "as a gang of individuals reinforcing each other in some off-the-line activity, also possibly, as a release of sex antagonisms by which men could make a woman suffer for her defiance of male

¹² Llewellyn, K. N. & Hoebel, E. A., *The Cheyenne Way*, Norman, 1941, pp. 202-9.

authority, it was possible for men to do collectively that which they did not individually hold to be honorable."¹³

The Comanche, both men and women, could express what aggression they felt toward other members of the group as directly as they wished, and often did; in-group murders were not infrequent, and were not regarded very seriously. On the other hand, this continued to be repressed throughout the life of a Cheyenne. Ideally, this suppression was complete; the chiefs and other men of high prestige who formed the ego-ideals for the tribe were expected to ignore completely the inroads of other men, even when they stole the chief's wife. Most men, however, could and did claim damages to sooth their tarnished egos.

Some outlets for aggression were socially sanctioned for the Cheyenne, the most obvious of these being the outward expression of aggression in warfare. But even here there is a contrast with Comanche, for Cheyenne warfare was surrounded with ritual and etiquette, and the highest achievement was not in killing an enemy, but in touching him on the field of battle—counting coup—irrespective of who killed him or even of whether he was dead. Comanche warfare was on a much more free-for-all basis, and most Comanche bands did not count coup at all, striving only to kill the enemy and steal his horses.

Another outlet lay in competitive games; such games are characteristic of all Plains societies, but the Cheyenne apparently far exceeded the Comanche in the number of games and the amount they were played. The Cheyenne were also enthusiastic gossips, but even this was a double-edged sword, for as we have seen it formed one of the strongest sanctions in favor of restraint and conformity.

In contrast again to the Comanche, if in-group aggression ever became so severe among the Cheyenne that a murder within the tribe resulted, the whole tribe was affected. The sacred medicine arrows were sullied, and a special ceremony had to be performed to renew them before any hazardous undertakings could be made by anyone. The murderer was an outcast within his group, and often fled to the Arapaho until things cooled off. Even on his return he remained in the lowest possible status for the rest of his life; such degradation applied even to war

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

chiefs. These extreme sanctions not only represent another repressive mechanism, but bear witness to the implicit recognition by the Cheyenne of the chaos and carnage which would result if their suppressed hatreds were ever given an opportunity for free expression.

Sorcery is frequently interpreted as symptomatic of aggressive anxieties in a society, and the contrast between these tribes in their attitudes toward sorcery and sorcerors is revealing. While there were sorcerors recognized by the Comanche, they were little feared; if they became too troublesome, an excuse was found and they were simply killed. On the other hand, only a few very powerful medicine men dared practice sorcery among the Cheyenne; but the people greatly feared those who did, and were powerless against them.

It is characteristic of strong hostility at an unconscious level that when its outward expression is blocked, it often turns inward upon the individual in the form of masochism. It is no accident that the Cheyenne reached a peak for the Plains in self-mutilation and torture. The extreme forms consisted in attaching ropes to skewers passed through holes cut in the flesh. These ropes usually ran from a pole to skewers on the chest, and the man would swing about the pole for hours, leaning against the rope and trying to pull out the skewers by breaking the loop of flesh. Or they might be attached to his back, and used to drag a collection of heavy buffalo skulls about. These ordeals were reserved for times of greatest anxiety: for a young man before he led his first war party, or in response to a vow made in requesting supernatural aid during the serious illness of a close relative. They were often performed during the Sun Dance, when power was running high; but they might also be done on a lonely hill, with a vision as a possible reward. For occasions of somewhat lesser anxiety, the cutting of strips of skin from the arms with accompanying ritual sufficed; the typical Cheyenne male had both arms covered with scars from such offerings. In either case the correlation of masochism with increased anxiety and its attendant rise in hostility is clear.

Thus with aggression, as with sex and interpersonal relations in general, we see the Cheyenne deeply inhibited and frustrated, while the Comanche gave full rein to their feelings. Why then,

when each took on the common culture, did they interpret it in such diametrically opposite ways?

As we have already seen, the Comanche came onto the Plains with an extremely loose social organization and an almost complete lack of social controls, made possible by the very small social groups typical of Plateau life. When they fell heir to the potentially highly destructive attitudes and techniques of the Plains, most of the aggression which might have been disastrous for their now somewhat larger groupings was directed outside, and their free system permitted what was left to dissipate itself without major damage within the community, as Kardiner has pointed out. The freedom in sexual expression, while not so pronounced for adults as for adolescents, was still sufficient to make marriages highly unstable; however, the organization into still fairly small shifting bands on the Plateau pattern, with an option for families to live alone, was sufficiently fluid to prevent disastrous disruption.

The Cheyenne, on the other hand, emerged from a tightly knit agricultural village culture with well structured social controls and an integrated social organization. Faced with the increased potentialities for aggression of warrior life, they channellized and circumscribed their hostilities now just as they had before channellized those which arose from the lesser frictions of sedentary village life,¹⁴ and rigid repression of in-group aggression resulted. Much the same processes were operative in regard to sex, for the informal and unregulated nature of nomadic life made the disruptive potentialities of casual sex relations far greater, and the society had to fortify the superego to compensate for the decreased effectiveness of external sanctions. It is clear from material upon the Algonkin tribes of the western Great Lakes, neighbors of the Cheyenne in their erstwhile habitat, that this process of internalizing the sex mores and thus creating anxieties in regard to sex was already well started before the Cheyenne became nomads.¹⁵ But the training in these eastern tribes is not nearly as strict nor as absolute as among the Cheyenne, and

¹⁴ Compare Hallowell, A. I., "Aggression in Salteaux Society," *Psychiatry*, vol. 3, 1940, pp. 395-407.

¹⁵ Compare Landes, R., *The Ojibwa Woman*, N. Y., 1938; Michelson, T., "The Autobiography of a Fox Indian Woman," *40th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1925, pp. 291-350.

applies almost exclusively to girls; the fact that boys are expected and tacitly encouraged to have affairs and attempt the seduction of virtuous girls demonstrates that these peoples are far less concerned with the possible effects of such activities upon the society than were the Cheyenne.

These two cultures, though representative, are not all of the Plains; nor have we explored all the ramifications of Kardiner's analysis of the Comanche with which comparisons could be made. But it is clear that the Plains people, for all their cultural homogeneity, were anything but identical in their basic personality structures, and that the opportunity to siphon aggression out of the group in warfare is not by itself enough to keep tensions within the group at a low level.

The other Plains tribes came from yet different cultural and historical backgrounds. A review from this standpoint of others of these peoples should prove highly instructive.¹⁶

¹⁶ Goldfrank, E. S., *Historic Change and Social Character: a Study of the Teton Dakota*, American Anthropologist, vol. 45, n.s., 1943, pp. 67-83 suggests personality formations in the Dakota closer to the Comanche than the Cheyenne. However, as she was concerned primarily with in-group conflict, and with the transition from the free life to the restraints under white control, comparability with the above analysis is largely lacking.

